Sailors and Marines Reducing Mishaps

BRAVO Zulu

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AD1(AW) Mark Hudson
HSL-44 Det 8

Petty Officer Hudson discovered fuel leaking from the No. 1 engine of Magnum 440 during a hot-section wash. Further inspection revealed a missing O-ring packing in an area that leads from the overspeed and drain valve into the accessory gearbox, causing fuel to leak during normal operation. Petty Officer Hudson's keen attention to detail allowed him to initiate timely repairs and break the mishap chain, making MAGNUM 440 immediately available for the tasking from the Carrier Strike Group deployed in the Arabian Gulf.

PO2 Reagan Payne
USCG Air Station, Clearwater, Fla.

While in support of recovery operations for Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, Petty Officer Payne was completing an hourly engine inspection on a Sikorsky HH-60J search and rescue helicopter. Using a state-of-the-art borescope, Petty Officer Payne found several hairline cracks in the No. 1 engine high-speed shaft flex pack.

Petty Officer Payne's strict attention to detail most certainly prevented a major catastrophic failure of the No. 1 engine high-speed shaft, avoiding possible damage to the airframe and, most importantly, averting a potential mishap.

AD3 Richard Bailey and AM2 Brian Rimler
VAW-124

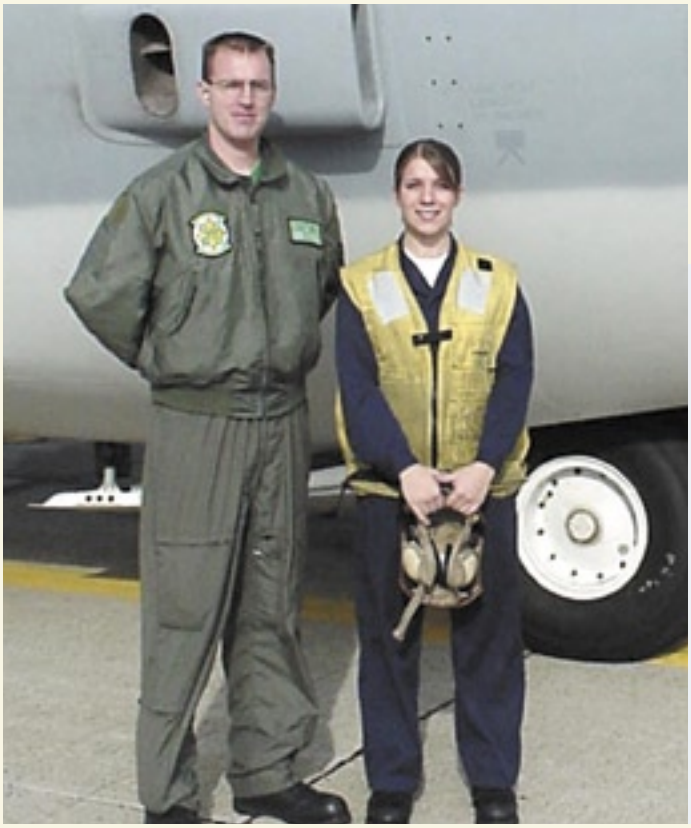
Petty Officer Bailey was positioned next to the main entrance hatch of an E-2C Hawkeye as a safety observer. His shipmate was doing an internal aircraft final inspection before launch. When exiting the hatch, the shipmate turned the wrong direction and headed toward the aircraft's rotating propeller. Petty Officer Bailey immediately grabbed the individual, preventing a catastrophic loss of life.

Petty Officer Rimler acted with commendable courage while stationed near the catapult shot line as a final checker. He recognized a member of the ship's catapult crew unknowingly break the propeller safety chain, which was composed of squadron personnel.

AM3(AW) Jeremy Pavlosky
VAQ-139

Acting as the port-exhaust safety observer during a night launch, Petty Officer Pavlovsky observed a ship's V1 director climb out of the catwalk and up the ladder in direct line of the turning EA-6B exhaust. Ignoring Petty Officer Pavlovsky's waving flashlight, the director proceeded to climb the ladder. As the director reached the flight deck, the EA-6B exhaust nearly knocked him from the ladder and over the side of the catwalk.

Petty Officer Pavlovsky reacted quickly, pulling the director by his float coat onto the flight deck and out of the line of the exhaust.



AM3 Bradley Lawson
VAW-124

During a day launch of Hawkeye 600 while on deployment on board USS *Theodore Roosevelt*, a young plane captain from another squadron was following his aircraft up the "street." The individual ducked underneath the rear of the FA-18, stepping through the prop-arc safety chain and heading straight for the prop. Petty Officer Lawson immediately grabbed him and knocked the individual out of the way mere inches from being hit by a propeller.

Petty Officer Lawson's quick actions and safety mindset prevented a tragic mishap.

AM2 (NAC) Brian Gillespie and AM3 Kathryn Cayer
VR-62

During engine start-up for a routine training mission, the second loadmaster, Petty Officer Gillespie, and plane captain, Petty Officer Cayer, were positioned in front of the aircraft to observe the start. They noticed the inboard, life-raft-compartment door on top of the starboard wing momentarily spring open and then return to a normal position. They immediately notified the aircraft commander, who terminated the start.

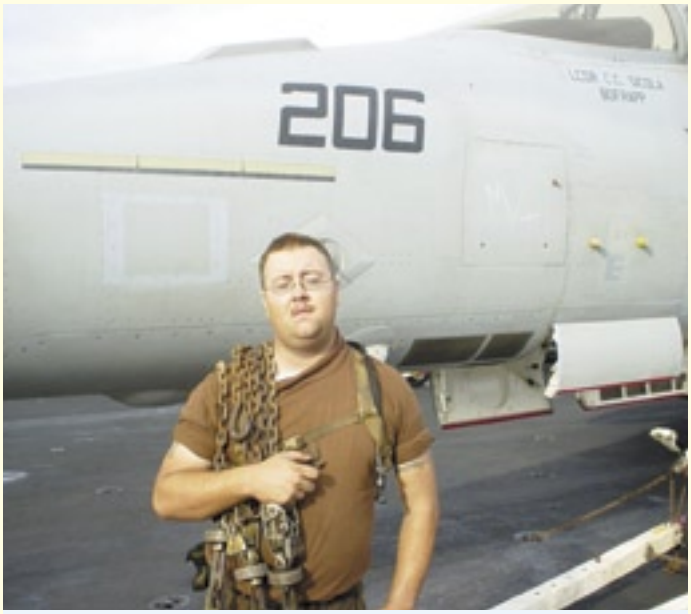
Upon further investigation, squadron personnel found that the life-raft-compartment latches had released, allowing the propeller wash to blow open the door.

Petty Officers Gillespie and Cayer caught a fleeting glimpse of a problem that could have resulted in an in-flight deployment of the life raft, which could have jammed the flight controls and caused serious damage to aircraft and the possible loss of the aircrew.

AT2(AW) Shannon Strickland
VX-20

A P-3 was sent on a logistics mission to deliver mission-capable parts for a detached squadron aircraft. Upon arrival and after securing the engines, the ground crew began to download the parts and associated gear.

Petty Officer Strickland noticed hot brakes on the port side of the aircraft, immediately stopped the download evolution, and then cleared everyone away from the explosive hazard that existed.



AN James McClure
VFA-14

On a routine day during WestPac 2005 on board USS *Nimitz*, everything was going according to plan. Camelot 200 had just recovered and was taxied to a spot in the corral. Airman McClure was the plane captain and had just returned from 90 days TAD on the mess decks. The aircraft director turned over the aircraft for shutdown. After securing the port engine and while waiting for the pilot's signal to shut down the starboard engine, purple shirts arrived to fuel the aircraft for the next launch.

One of the purple shirts attempted to untangle a grounding strap and unknowingly walked directly toward the starboard intake. He was dangerously close to the intake when Airman McClure grabbed his float coat and pulled him to safety.

Sgt. Michael Blua and LCpl. Joshua Gomez
VMAQ-1

While supporting 24-hour combat flight operations, Sgt. Blua and LCpl. Gomez were investigating engine irregularities on one of the squadron's EA-6B Prowlers. LCpl. Gomez was first to discover a small crack in the port inlet casing, which was visible only from inside the inlet. He suspected the crack would be larger underneath the surface. After NDI, the crack was found to be more than six inches long. Had the aircraft been flown, it is likely that catastrophic engine failure would have occurred from FOD.

Sgt. Blua was convinced the port engine still wasn't running properly, so he insisted on having the engine borescoped. His attention to detail paid off when the results showed a first-stage turbine stator had been burned away to less that half its normal size. Continued operation of this engine would have resulted in failure of the stator and possible FOD damage.